

Sharing What We Know



U.S. Forest Service International Programs
Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP)

Annual Report for FY 2007

Publication Credits

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Sharing What We Know

In a world where the causes and consequences of wildland fire are global, the knowledge of wildland fire and how to manage it must no longer be local. We all have to share what we know. *œ Dr. Jimmy L. Reaves, U.S. Forest Service*



The U.S. Forest Service and its partners are increasingly aware of the relationship between global climate trends, extreme weather conditions, fire management practices and wildfire vulnerability. The Office of International Programs has a long history of engagement in wildfire cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building in places as diverse as Indonesia, Siberia, Mexico and Bulgaria where techniques and methodologies for fire management have been both learned and shared.

During the summer of 2007, Southern Europe, Eastern Europe and Latin America suffered catastrophic wildfires. Through the DASP, the U.S. Forest Service helped to frame a robust U.S. Government response. With USAID/OFDA support, DASP provided specialized equipment and technical assistance, bringing practitioners from the U.S. Forest Service together with international colleagues to share common experiences and build a shared vision of reduced wildfire vulnerability and coordinated response. This type of collaboration gives the U.S. Forest Service insights and new ideas that help to improve response systems and services in the United States. Ultimately, these efforts support USAID/OFDA's global mission to save lives, reduce human suffering and reduce the economic impacts of disasters. They also help the U.S. Forest Service achieve its own strategic goals by developing technical and leadership skills to meet current and future challenges and improving the capacity of employees to develop and sustain partnerships.

I hope that this *Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report* illustrates how the work of the DASP continues to strengthen the U.S. Government's response to international disasters by providing critical support including systems, methodologies, training, personnel, equipment and links to capacity building resources that enable managers and practitioners to share what they know.

Stephanie Fritz Savolaine
Assistant Director, US Forest Service International Programs
Disaster Assistance Support Program
May 30, 2007

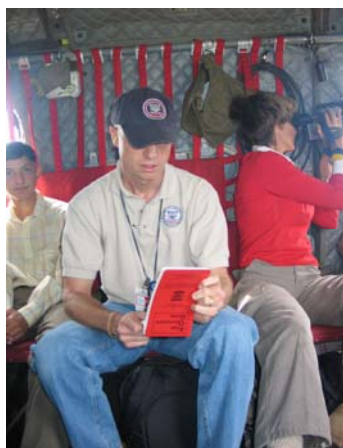
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Background: The Disaster Assistance Support Program

The DASP was created in 1985 to provide the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) with technical support in disaster response management, planning, operations, preparedness and prevention.

Because the Forest Service developed and implements the Incident Command System (ICS), which is now the Command and Management component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), this partnership was originally forged to leverage the Forest Service's significant expertise in emergency management systems in order to build and improve USAID/OFDA's disaster response capabilities. Over the past 20 years the role of DASP has grown to include emergency support functions, providing extensive training, helping to improve USAID/OFDA's methodologies for disaster response and coordinating USAID and Embassy disaster preparedness. The DASP consists of six full-time staff providing services in a number of key areas.

Methodology and Systems



Former USAID/OFDA staff member Skylar Sherman refers to his FOG during a disaster assessment

The US Forest Service developed and implements the Incident Command System (ICS), the U.S. Government's management system to organize emergency response. Through the DASP, the USFS has used this expertise to develop, manage and continually update many critical systems, procedures, guides and other tools to enhance and facilitate USAID/OFDA's disaster planning, management and response.

Significant examples include:

- Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) system and procedures;
- Field Operations Guide (FOG) for Disaster Assessment and Response;
- Response Management Team (RMT) system, policy and procedures; and
- Lessons learned surveys and After Action workshops, which provide a forum for sharing ideas and improving future operations.

DASP also plans, coordinates and facilitates USAID/OFDA's after action reviews (AARs), which serve to gather lessons learned with an eye towards improving systems and overall response effectiveness. AARs have served as the impetus for the development of some of USAID/OFDA's core systems, including the DART, RMT and FOG.

Resources

The DASP enhances and supports USAID/OFDA's capacity to respond to disasters by mobilizing a roster of up to 350 disaster management experts from the Forest Service and other agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as needed. This program is a key component of the USAID/OFDA short-term emergency surge capacity and is particularly suitable because of the detailers' familiarity with ICS. This foundation allows DASP detailers to quickly and seamlessly integrate into USAID/OFDA's operational systems. Available skills include logistics, operations, geographic information, planning, programming, disaster assessment and response, facilitation, training, watershed management, engineering, forestry and a variety of other disciplines.



U.S. Forest Service and Greek Fire Brigade experts review a map of wildfire affected areas in Evia, Greece (Photo: Yoni Bock)

By accessing US Forest Service and BLM warehouses and caches, DASP also provides specialized equipment to meet USAID/OFDA's emergency response needs worldwide including field support packs, remote location kits, office supply kits, first aid kits, chainsaws, wildland firefighting equipment, telecommunications equipment and other supplies.

Training

The DASP develops and provides DART/RMT training and briefings to about 200 USAID, Forest Service, BLM and other USG staff and partners each year. DASP also provides support to key components of other USAID/OFDA trainings, such as Humanitarian Affairs training for the U.S. military, First Aid and others.

Mission Disaster Preparedness

The DASP, in partnership with USAID/OFDA's field staff, is leading efforts to ensure that USG partners fully understand their own roles, the role and capabilities of USAID/OFDA and the processes and mechanisms for providing disaster assistance. This is a relatively new endeavor for the DASP, requiring close coordination with USAID/OFDA's Disaster Response and Mitigation Division and the State Department's Emergency Planning Branch within Diplomatic Security. The Emergency Planning Branch manages the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) process.

The EAP provides guidance to posts on how to respond to a range of potential crises, from fires and hostage takings all the way through evacuation. Annex J of the EAP, also known as the Mission Disaster Relief Plan (MDRP), provides information and guidance to posts on coordinating and managing USG assistance to host countries in the event of a natural or human-caused disaster. The MDRP assigns responsibilities, clarifies authority and lines of communication, assesses

host nation vulnerability to disasters and sets forth guidelines for the conduct of emergency operations including the provision of USG relief assistance.

In addition to providing technical assistance to US Missions to complete their MDRPs, the Mission Disaster Preparedness (MDP) program seeks to:



USAID/OFDA Regional Advisors Tom Dolan and Rob Barton accompany a group of MDROs from Asia

- Ensure that US Mission staff and key players understand the resources and capabilities of USAID/OFDA, the appropriate procedures for accessing these resources and the role of USAID, the Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) and Alternate Mission Disaster Relief Officer (AMDRO) in the event of a disaster.
- Strengthen and continue to build a cooperative network between US Missions and USAID/OFDA.
- Advance the credibility of the MDRO and AMDRO and establish them as lead at post on disaster response with the host country.
- Ensure that US Mission members are familiar with the contents of the MDRP.

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Performance and Accountability Highlights

The DASP program contributes to the strategic plans of the U.S. Forest Service, USAID and U.S. Department of State.

U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service works with partners worldwide to address policy, technical, research and disaster management issues that impact natural resources management and sustainability, both overseas and in the United States. The *USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (FY 2007 – FY 2012)* validates that the increasing interconnectedness of global ecological, social and economic forces dictate the necessity to remain connected with partners who need help in some areas and who can also offer innovations and tools that may advance Forest Service goals.

Recognizing this imperative, *international engagement* is a primary management principle of the U.S. Forest Service, which aims to stay abreast of the international trends that shape natural resource policies and management worldwide. Disasters are one such trend. The international community has recognized the links between climate and natural resource management, disaster risk reduction and poverty. Indeed, the United Nations is now aligning its humanitarian and environment programs in order to develop a more cohesive [strategic framework](#) for multilateral interventions in the areas of risk reduction, emergency response and recovery.

With full program funding from USAID/OFDA, DASP offers opportunities for U.S. Forest Service employees to engage in these emerging global issues through first-hand experiences during large-scale international humanitarian responses. DASP's work also provides a means for the Agency to achieve its fifth strategic goal, to maintain basic management capabilities of the Forest Service, by developing technical and leadership skills to meet current and future challenges and improving the capacity of employees to develop and sustain partnerships.

Finally, the U.S. Forest Service recognizes that maintaining and improving the skills of a diverse workforce improves program efficiency. DASP helps promote the Agency's employee principles of career management and skill development by accessing opportunities for staff to apply technical skills in new settings and in new ways. Agency personnel working overseas and in assignments at cooperating U.S. Government Agencies in Washington, DC improve their own skills and knowledge and bring new insights back to their day-to-day work in their home units.



Burned forests above a small village in Greece may increase landslide risk, illustrating the link between natural resources management and disaster risk
(Photo: Annette Parsons)

USAID and the Department of State

The Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004 to 2009 sets forth the Secretary of State's direction and priorities for both organizations in the coming years. The Strategic Plan supports the policy positions set forth by President Bush in the [2002 National Security Strategy](#) and presents how the Department and USAID will implement U.S. foreign policy and development assistance.



The full strategic plan can be found at: <http://www.state.gov/m/rm/rls/dosstrat/2004/>

USAID/OFDA's programs are instrumental in realizing the joint strategic goal for humanitarian response, which seeks to minimize the human costs of displacement, conflicts and natural disasters. In FY 2007, USAID/OFDA responded to 77 disasters affecting more than 94 million people in 57 countries and provided over \$479 million for the purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies and to support relief activities in critical sectors. By providing critical resources, systems, training and preparedness, DASP supports USAID/OFDA's efforts to provide life-saving assistance and support for the transition to development, uphold international standards, promote durable solutions for displaced persons and improve disaster prevention and response capabilities. Specifically, DASP:

- Continually improves USAID/OFDA's internal response capabilities by developing critical systems to facilitate disaster planning, management and response. DASP trains hundreds of USAID/OFDA staff and partners about these systems, which always harmonize and uphold international standards.
- Mobilizes a roster of up to 350 disaster management experts and a wide variety of specialized equipment to help USAID/OFDA provide life-saving assistance during disasters.
- Leads efforts to ensure that USG partners fully understand their own roles, the role and capabilities of USAID/OFDA and the processes and mechanisms for providing disaster assistance.
- Provides initial support and links to longer-term U.S. Forest Service technical assistance to help build local and global response capabilities, linking humanitarian response with longer term development goals.

The Joint Strategic Plan also recognizes that the United States has both humanitarian and security interests in helping countries tackle social and environmental problems. Left unresolved, these problems will aggravate social and political instability and could reverse the development advances made over the last several decades. By confronting these problems, we can save lives, reduce human suffering, lay the groundwork for sustainable economic development and prevent adverse conditions from spilling across our borders.

DASP's links to U.S. Forest Service capacity building resources help to develop and expand partnerships with other governments, civil society and the private sector to promote sound resource management focusing especially on forests and ecosystems.

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Administration

Personnel



*assignment in Darfur,
Sudan*

On August 3, 2007, DASP Training Coordinator Gary Barrett accepted a position with the U.N. Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) Field Office in Juba, Sudan. Gary has been an integral part of the DASP for almost ten years and has worked on nearly every aspect of this team's portfolio.

In recent years, Gary spearheaded the redesign of a dynamic, updated *DART/RMT Essential Course*, collaborating closely with USAID/OFDA's Training Unit. He is known as a vibrant instructor, able to engage the interest of a diverse audience with humor and aplomb. Gary has also offered a tremendous amount of creative energy to the DASP team, helping to map new directions for training, systems and detailer support.

Gary's eleven month assignment with UNJLC will bring him back to Washington, DC in July 2008, when he will assume a full-time position in the U.S. Forest Service Office of International Programs. At that time, Gary will become a resource to USAID/OFDA, accessible through the DASP detailer program.

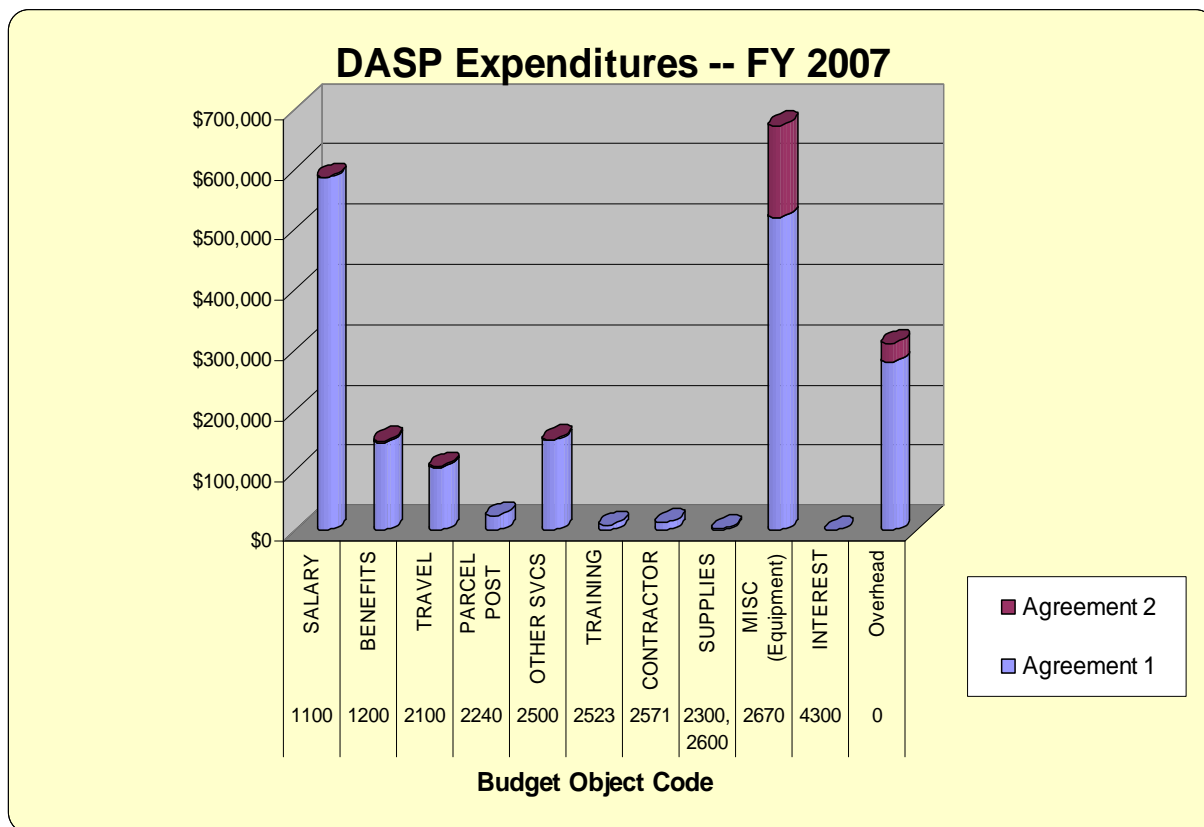
During the remaining months of the fiscal year, DASP spent considerable time recruiting and advertising the DASP Training Coordinator position, which will be filled in FY 2008.

At the end of FY 2007, DASP core staff members were:

- Stephanie Fritz Savolaine – Assistant Director, International Programs, DASP
- Laura Chapman – Disaster Management Specialist
- Scott Hocklander – Detailer Program Coordinator
- Chris Leonardo – Mission Disaster Preparedness Coordinator
- Yolanda Yeldell – Program Associate

The DASP negotiated a Short Term Assistance from Retirees (STARs) contract with Tom Frey and he served in a number of assignments for USAID/OFDA's Operations Liaison Unit (OLU).¹

¹ The Short Term Assistance Retirees (STARs) program was developed in FY 2006. A partnership between METI, Inc. and Forest Service International Programs, the program accesses retirees from USG land management agencies for international technical assistance and disaster response projects at USAID/OFDA's request.

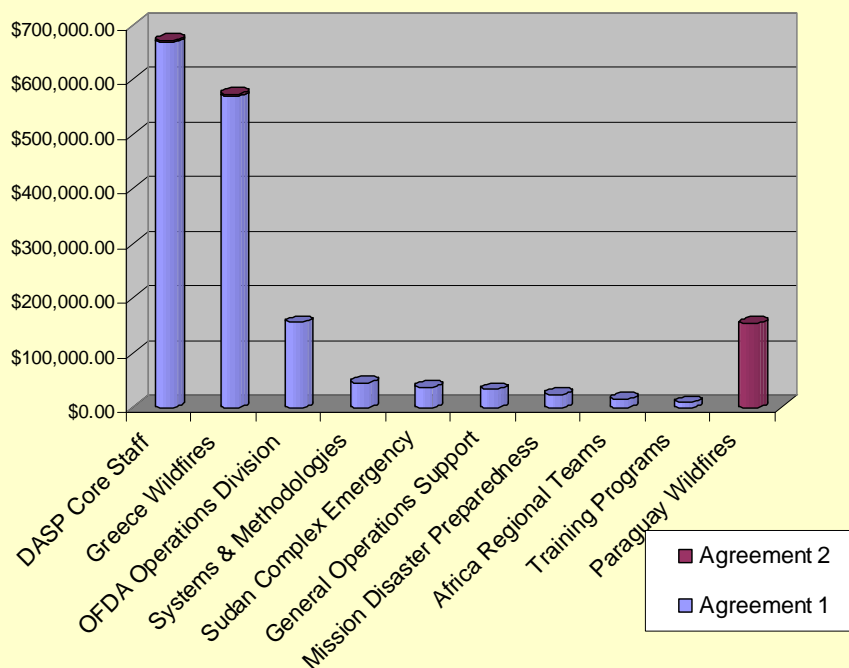
Finance

On September 30, 2007, DASP completed a five-year agreement (DCH-P-00-03-00002-00, hereafter referred to as “Agreement 1”); on August 22, 2007, DASP signed a new five-year agreement (FDA-P-00-07-00004-00, hereafter referred to as “Agreement 2”) with a start date of October 1, 2007 and an end date of September 30, 2012. USAID/OFDA obligated \$1.9 million in the new agreement to cover program expenses in September 2007 and throughout FY 2008. This annual report summarizes FY 2007 program obligations under both agreements, which ran concurrently during the month of September 2007.

DASP’s program expenditures during the year totaled \$2,024,762.31, including overhead. Of this amount, \$1,834,139.11 was obligated under Agreement 1, with an overhead rate of 18%; \$190,623.20 was obligated under Agreement 2, with an overhead rate of 19%. The preceding chart shows program expenditures listed by budget object code, as specified in the agreements. In Agreement 1, the majority of program funds (\$731,479, or about 47%) supported salary and benefits for DASP core staff and detailers; roughly 33% of program funds were used to purchase specialized equipment and supplies in response to wildfires in Greece. In Agreement 2, nearly all of the program funds expended (\$152,448.52, or about 95%) were used to purchase specialized equipment in response to wildfires in Paraguay.

DASP also tracks expenditures by functional areas. The following chart reflects expenditures for major projects during the fiscal year, including core staff, systems & methodologies, training and mission disaster preparedness. As a whole, DASP expended about 39% of program funds on expenses related to core staff, including salary and benefits and about 42% of funds on wildfire equipment for Greece and Paraguay.

DASP Expenditures by Project -- FY 2007



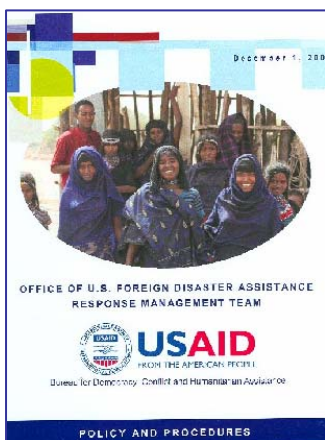
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Methodology and Systems

Highlights

- Completed and distributed an updated *Response Management Team (RMT) Policy and Procedures Manual*
- Developed a FOG distribution policy and distributed over 1,200 FOGs to staff and partners
- Completed Lebanon complex emergency after action review

Response Management Team (RMT) Policy and Procedures



USAID/OFDA has developed a Washington-based response management system to complement and support USAID/OFDA's existing DART structure. The RMT was first conceived in FY 2001. In the ensuing years, USAID/OFDA's systems and procedures have evolved, necessitating a system update and revision and DASP was tasked to undertake this update.

In December 2007, DASP received final clearances and finalized the revised *USAID/OFDA RMT Policy and Procedures* manual. In early February, DASP distributed RMT binders to all USAID/OFDA headquarters staff in Washington, DC and to all Operations Center work stations.

During the second quarter, DASP conceptualized and completed an addendum to the Policy focused on the unique the needs of parents of newborn infants and adopted children and breastfeeding mothers.

The addendum recognizes the need for all new parents to bond with and nurture newborn infants and adopted children. As such, all employees are eligible for an exemption from RMT duty for one 6-month rotation for the birth or adoption of a child. Further, USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS Chapter 212) outlines a policy of breastfeeding promotion for development and relief programs overseas. USAID/OFDA seeks to protect the ability of its employees to breastfeed their infants, consistent with USAID's global priorities for maternal and child health. As such, in lieu of the general exemption for parents of newborn infants, breastfeeding mothers are eligible for an exemption from RMT duty for two 6-month rotations in order to support successful lactation.

Exemptions must be scheduled in consultation with an employee's supervisor and USAID/OFDA's Field Support Team (FST), which manages and schedules the roster for the monthly RMT rotation.



Field Operations Guide (FOG)

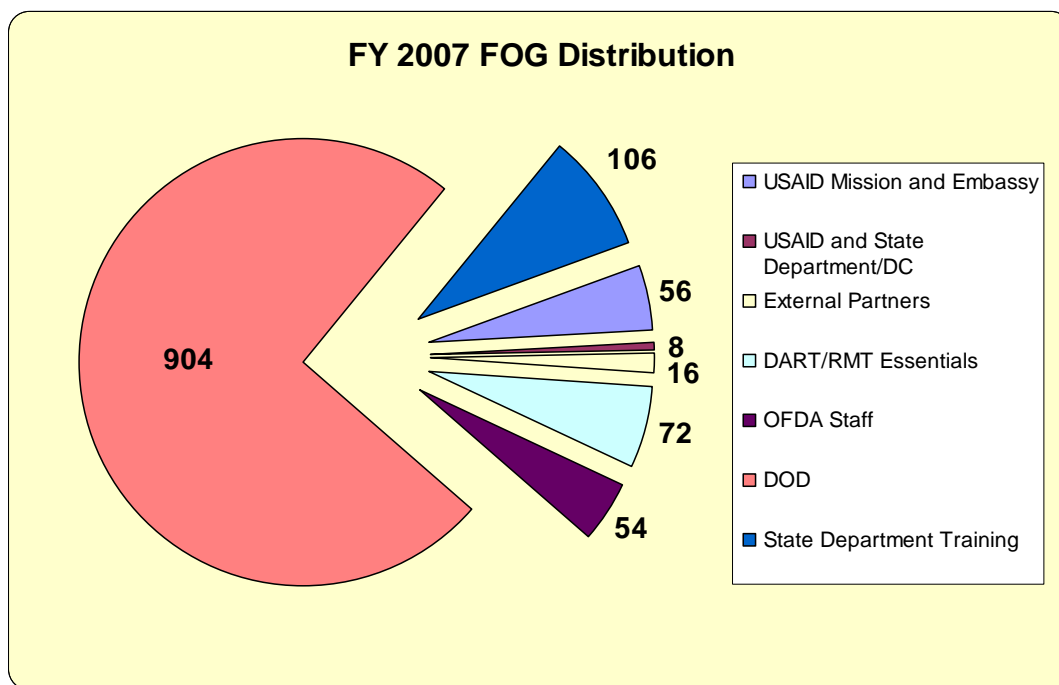
Every year USAID/OFDA receives dozens of requests for the *Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response (FOG)* from a wide spectrum of people and organizations. During the first quarter, members of DASP worked closely with the FST to develop and finalize a distribution policy for FOGs. The policy helps the DASP to make consistent decisions about the distribution of FOGs based on clear priorities determined by USAID/OFDA's Senior Management Team (SMT).

Guiding principles of the policy include:

- FOGs are meant to be used as field guides in humanitarian response operations, as opposed to tokens or gifts;
- FOGs are available for purchase by the general public from the GPO; and
- A free Adobe Acrobat version is available online from the USAID website:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/resources/pdf/fog_v4.pdf.

The policy stipulates that USAID/OFDA's Operations Liaison Unit and the Office of the Director will each receive an allotment of FOGs every year to meet their unique representational requirements. USAID/OFDA also plans to provide FOGs for all new USAID/OFDA staff and all participants in the *DART/RMT Essentials* course and *Joint Humanitarian Operations Course (JHOC)*. Other requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis to meet defined needs.



With assistance from the National Interagency Fire Center returns warehouse in Boise, ID and USAID/OFDA's Quincy Street warehouse in Arlington, VA, DASP distributed 1,216 copies of the FOG during the year. Recipients included USAID/OFDA staff and trainees (field and Washington, DC); USAID Missions and Embassies; USAID and State Department colleagues in Washington, DC; and implementing partners. Nearly 75% were distributed to the Department of Defense (DOD) through USAID/OFDA's Operations Liaison Unit (OLU), primarily in support of various Joint Humanitarian Operations Courses (JHOCs).

Lebanon After-Action Review



USG relief supplies await distribution to conflict-affected populations at an airstrip in Beirut, Lebanon.

In FY 2007, DASP completed a multi-tier after action review focused on the USAID/OFDA humanitarian response to the complex emergency in Lebanon. As a foundation for this process, DASP prepared and distributed an anonymous, on-line survey about USAID/OFDA's relief operations and coordination with partners. Over 20 U.S. Government staffers and nearly 30 non-governmental organization (NGO), international organization and United Nations representatives responded. Survey responses framed the agendas for three separate workshops and meetings which were

coordinated and facilitated by the DASP, including:

- On January 17, a one-day workshop for a broad audience to discuss and capture lessons learned. The morning was focused on internal discussions and the afternoon provided a venue for discussion with interagency colleagues from the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of State and other agencies.
- On January 22, a meeting between USAID/OFDA and State Department's Office of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM). Focal issues included reporting during major disaster responses and cooperative staffing of DARTs and RMTs. On March 27 A final report of notes and proceedings was distributed to USAID/OFDA and PRM.



A young girl receives USAID/OFDA-funded relief supplies from Mercy Corps in Lebanon.

- On March 14, a meeting with NGO implementing partners at the offices of InterAction. Focal issues included safety/security, programming and grant processing. On March 22, a final report of notes and proceedings was distributed to USAID/OFDA and InterAction.

Responding to an after action recommendation, DASP conducted a follow-up briefing for PRM about the revised *RMT Policy and Procedures Manual*. The briefing focused on the RMT Policy and Annex D (Planning Section Procedures), including the roles and responsibilities of the External Liaison Coordinator (ELC), which would be PRM's primary point of contact during an RMT activation. DASP solicited PRM feedback and input on the Planning Section Procedures and gathered a number of helpful ideas. DASP is working to incorporate these recommendations into USAID/OFDA's regular business operations.

On May 18, DASP completed the final after action report on the USAID/OFDA response to the Lebanon Emergency, incorporating the summary reports for each of these events. DASP received positive feedback for its work throughout the process, summarized by veteran USAID/OFDA field staffer Mia Beers, who wrote:

It is always appreciated to read the 'big picture' review of USAID/OFDA's response, especially after having been on the ground. You and your team always do such a great job facilitating the workshops and producing the reports.

In July, DASP created a public eRoom containing all USAID/OFDA after action reports dating from 1990 to the present. USAID/OFDA Information Management Coordinator Kathleen Miner responded that *"being able to access the reports is ... a major step. (I)t is a good template for other reports that need to be more accessible."*

International Assistance System

In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the U.S. Government (USG) received over 150 offers of assistance from foreign governments. In the midst of the crisis, USAID/OFDA worked with the Department of State (DOS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop an ad-hoc process for managing these offers. Subsequently, the USG established policies and procedures for handling international assistance in the United States. These policies and procedures are outlined in the International Assistance System Concept of Operations (IAS ConOps). In FY 2007, DASP worked closely with USAID/OFDA's FST on the following activities related to the IAS ConOps:

- *Tabletop Exercise:* USAID/OFDA and FEMA developed a tabletop exercise to test and identify gaps in the system and clarify or revise procedures. Held on November 20, 2006, the exercise was attended by 36 representatives from over 10 Federal Departments and Agencies including USAID, FEMA, the Department of State, Department of Defense, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Safety Administration.

The scenario was a massive earthquake in Portland, Oregon. Participants were broken into small groups and represented their agency in performing a number of tasks using the IAS ConOps guidance. The exercise generated discussions that helped clarify agency roles and responsibilities and lessons learned were used to make some minor modifications in the system.

- *USAR Exercise:* Following a massive earthquake, FEMA may request international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) assistance during the initial stages of a domestic response. Such assistance must be deployed rapidly. The CBP and regulatory agencies such as FDA and USDA are critical in expediting the entry of international USAR team personnel and equipment.

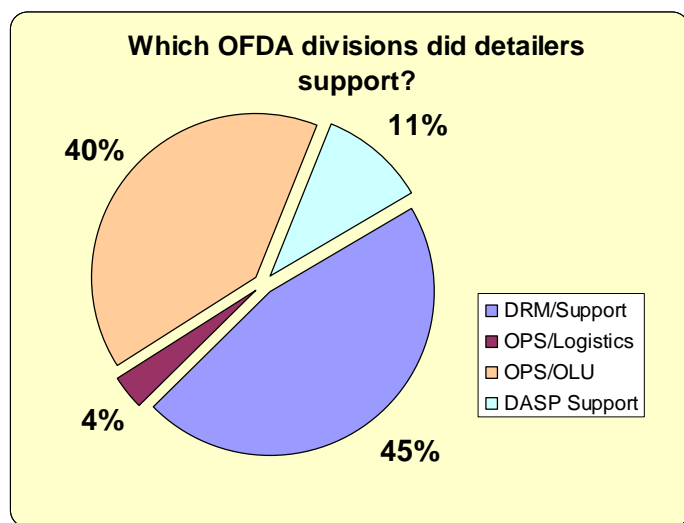
To help these agencies understand the types and quantity of equipment and supplies that international USAR teams require, USAID/OFDA invited agency representatives to observe an exercise conducted by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The exercise simulated the deployment of the Fairfax USAR team to England in response to a terrorist attack and was used to classify Fairfax as a “heavy team” under the United Nations’ International Search and Rescue Advisory Group guidelines.

Interagency observers were thankful for the opportunity to study the customs clearance process and identify commodities requiring domestic agency oversight.

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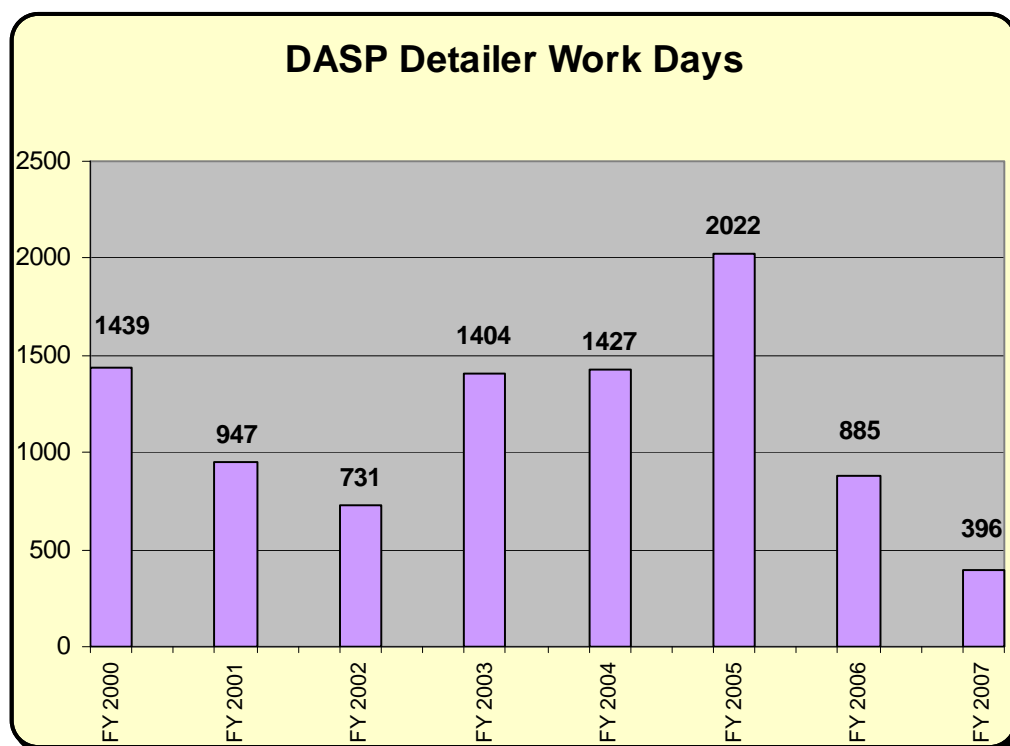
Resources

Personnel Summary

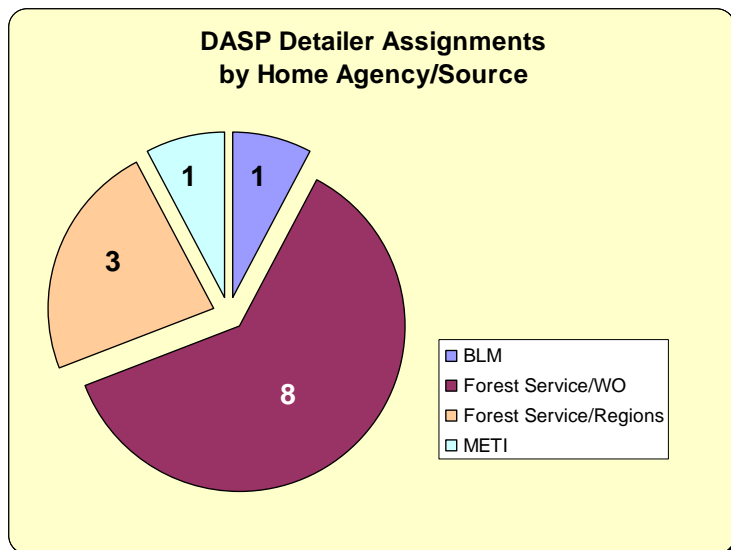


In FY 2007, DASP sent detailers on 18 assignments to support a variety of USAID/OFDA operational requirements. These detailers contributed a total of 396 work days (1.5 work years) toward international disaster response operations. This year, 45% of detailer days supported the work of the Disaster Response and Mitigation Division (DRM), primarily for the Regional Team for Sudan and the Darfur Field Office. This represents a significant increase from FY2006

when about 10% of detailer days were spent in DRM. The remaining 55% of detailer work days supported the work of USAID/OFDA's Operations Division, including the DASP. The most significant OFDA/OPS assignment was completed by METI/STARs contractor Tom Frey who spent six months in Stuttgart, Germany, as a Liaison Officer to the U.S. military combatant command for Africa (AFRICOM).



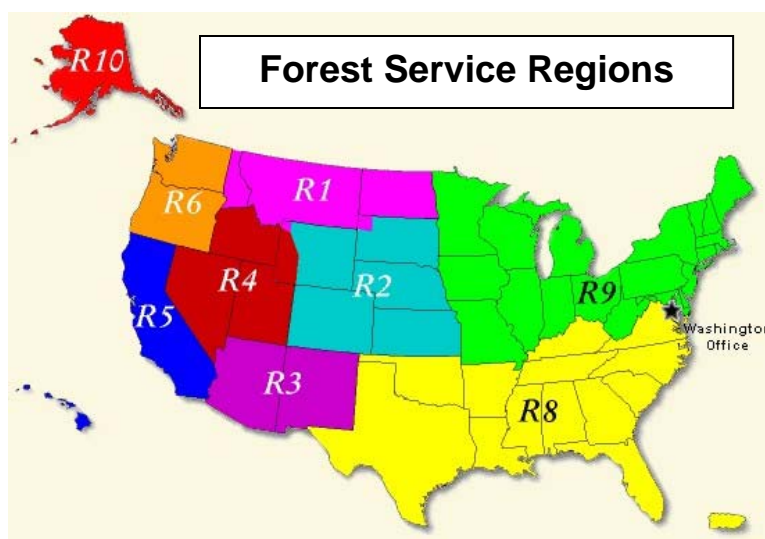
The overall number of detailer work days totaled 396, which is a 56% decrease from FY 2006 and an 80% decrease from FY 2005, partially due to a lack of DART and RMT activations. This was the first time in approximately eight years that a DASP detailer did not participate in a DART or RMT.



With only thirteen individual assignments, DASP still provided valuable coverage to address USAID/OFDA's operational priorities. DASP filled two Field Officer positions in response to the continuing Sudan/ Darfur complex emergency and dispatched technical experts in response to the wildfires in Greece. DASP also provided long-term staffing for DRM's Regional Team for Sudan and at AFRICOM in Stuttgart, Germany.

In FY2007, as in the past, DASP sought to fill assignments from a diverse pool of Forest Service and BLM employees. However, an unusually slow year yielded comparatively few opportunities for detailers originating from Forest Service and BLM field units. This cross-section of detailers completed a combined total of four assignments equivalent to 7% of detailer working days and hailed from two Forest Service regions (Region 1 - Nez Perce National Forest and Region 6 - Deschutes National Forest) and BLM/Boise. This year, most assignments were staffed by detailers from the Forest Service Washington Office (WO), with eight assignments representing just over 50% of detailer working days.

A METI/STARs contractor completed one assignment at AFRICOM representing 40% of all detailer working days. The STARs program enhances staff availability, particularly during periods of high-volume domestic disaster response such as wildfire season, or when specialized skills and/or experience are required and are not available within DASP's cadre of qualified detailers.



Cadre Maintenance and Development

DASP detailers provide surge staffing for Washington-based assignments, including RMTs; overseas support to deployed assessment and DART teams; and technical expertise that supports USAID/OFDA's day-to-day operations and its responses to disasters worldwide.

To continue to build and enhance this valuable surge staffing cadre, DASP developed a new training policy for prospective DASP detailers in FY 2006. The policy requires prospective detailers to complete an initial 2-day Orientation to the DASP training. Those who complete the course and obtain a secret level security clearance are eligible to attend the *DART/RMT Essentials* course with USAID/OFDA staff in Arlington, Virginia.

In FY 2007, DASP team conducted two iterations of the revised, 2-day orientation session for new Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) detailers. These briefings introduced 49 Forest Service and BLM staffers to the DASP's detailer program and its relationship to USAID/OFDA. The objectives of the course were:

- To explain the purpose of the DASP detailer program and how it supports the surge staffing needs of USAID/OFDA;
- To describe and discuss the type of detailer opportunities available to Forest Service and BLM personnel;
- To give participants a brief overview of OFDA, its mission and partners;
- To showcase the importance of cultural differences when responding to disasters or working in new environments; and
- To identify additional steps necessary to participate in the DASP detailer program.



*The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho served as the training site for DASP Detailer Orientation in November.
(Photo: www.nifc.gov)*

The BLM International Programs Coordinator praised the redesigned version of the orientation because it gives candidates accurate expectations about the detailer program and the nature of work with USAID/OFDA. Participant feedback was very positive and included these comments:

- *"Excellent Sessions! Very Useful. I can't wait to get my security clearance."*
- *"This was one of the best courses I have taken. The cultural awareness exercise was fun and engaging."*
- *"This briefing totally expanded my knowledge of USG humanitarian operations. The instructors did a wonderful job and kept the class motivated."*

In order to ensure effective targeting of outreach and recruitment for detailer opportunities, DASP continued a comprehensive review of its detailer cadre. Team members contacted Forest Service and BLM staff members who had previously completed DASP orientation to update contact information, hiring status, qualifications, security clearance status and availability. Furthermore, the DASP staff developed ways to improve the effectiveness of the current detailer database. These changes will allow DASP to recruit detailers for specific assignments in a timely manner and improve the effectiveness of the database.

Equipment and Supplies

Staff at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho assemble, cache and transport emergency equipment, Team Support Kits, Field Support Packs and related supplies to support USAID/OFDA teams through a cooperative agreement between BLM and DASP. NIFC assists DASP by maintaining a cache with a designated stock level of DART Office Support Kits, FOGs, Field Packs and Remote Location (RoLo) Kits that are provided to personnel on field assignments. In June 2007, NIFC refurbished 13 RoLos in response to a specific request from USAID/OFDA/Logi

Significant Detailer Assignments

DASP detailers play a major role in USAID/OFDA's ability to respond to disasters worldwide. The following section describes several of the efforts in which DASP core staff and detailers were engaged during FY 2007.

Country	Respondents	Disaster Type	Purpose
Somalia	Scott Hocklander	Complex Emergency	DART, Acting Regional Advisor
Darfur/Sudan	Laura Chapman Jennifer Conje Christine Leonardo	Complex Emergency	Field Office Support
Greece	Jim Boukidis Tom Harbour Annette Parsons Stephanie Savolaine	Wildfires	Assessment Team
AFRICOM	Tom Frey	n/a	Coordination

**Dates can be found in the personnel summary at the end of the report.*

Somalia Complex Emergency

In March and April 2007, DASP provided Scott Hocklander as an acting Regional Advisor (RA) for USAID/OFDA's East and Central African Region Office (ECARO) covering the Horn of Africa including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia.

During the first two weeks of the assignment, DASP core staff member Scott served also as the Program Officer on the Somalia Complex Emergency Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). At the conclusion of the DART, he then assumed responsibility for the Somalia portfolio as acting RA. While he responded to some regional issues including outbreaks of locust in several Horn countries, Scott spent the majority of his time on reporting and programming for the USAID/OFDA response in Somalia.

In describing Scott's work, Regional Advisor Jack Myer stated that, *"(h)e did a great job, really excellent. He dove right in, took initiative, watched out for USAID/OFDA's interests, provided good analytical reports, kept me in the loop and was generally a major asset to the East and Central Africa Regional Office (ECARO)."*



Children in Somalia participate in a hygiene education program funded by USAID.

(Photo: www.usaid.gov)

Darfur/Sudan Complex Emergency

The 4-year conflict in Darfur, Sudan, has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and driven more than 2 million people from their homes. Families have been ravaged by the fighting, which has affected more than 60 percent of the population.



*DASP's Christine Leonardo consults with implementing partners in Darfur, Sudan.
(Photo: Ron Libby)*

During the summer months, DASP core staff members Laura Chapman (June 9 – July 16) and Christine Leonardo (July 10 – August 18) served as Field Officers in Darfur, based at the USAID/OFDA Sudan Field Office in Nyala. Laura and Chris helped to implement and monitor more than \$100 million in relief programs in cooperation with a variety of partners including United Nations Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations.

In Darfur, Laura and Chris visited large camps such as Otash, Kalma, El Sereif and Al Salam where IDPs have congregated and receive humanitarian aid. They also visited existing villages, strained from hosting large populations of IDPs. At these field sites, Laura and Chris met with implementing partners to monitor the effectiveness of U.S. Government relief activities, including challenges and emerging needs. This type of first-hand information helps USAID/OFDA to determine where and how to allocate resources to best address the needs of those affected by the conflict, aiming to improve the quality of life for affected families.

Sureka Khandagle, USAID/OFDA Team Leader for Darfur, said “... I can't even begin to tell you how helpful it is to have people like Chris and Laura out here. Just knowing I can trust their judgment on anything that comes up gives me such peace of mind.”

DASP also arranged surge staffing for USAID/OFDA's Washington-based regional team for Sudan, providing detailee Jennifer Conje who served as a Disaster Operations Specialist (August 20 -- September 30). Jen provided coverage for emerging disaster response issues in Sudan and Chad, managed grant awards to non governmental organizations (NGOs) and processed quarterly reports. She also led the development of a USAID/OFDA Task Order for the McFadden Corporation. She earned high praise for her work. USAID/OFDA's Division Director



*Mohammed Salih Haroun is saving money to build a home for his family in Darfur, Sudan
(Photo: Laura Chapman)*

for Program Support wrote that it was, “... *through her diligence, intellect and conscientiousness that we got this Task Order through so quickly.*”

Greece Wildfires

The 2007 wildfire season in Greece killed 76 people, destroyed nearly 3,000 buildings and burned 327,000 hectares with significant human, agricultural and economic losses. On August 27, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Thomas Countryman declared a disaster, opening the door for USAID/OFDA assistance. Initially, USAID/OFDA arranged for emergency relief supplies, including approximately \$570,000 in fire protective equipment accessed through the DASP agreement. USAID/OFDA also provided funding for two interagency technical assistance teams to work with Greek counterparts to respond to post-burn situations and strengthen disaster preparedness capacities.



*An interagency team assessed the impact of fires and post-fire hazards in Greece.
(Photo: Yoni Bock)*

US Forest Service experts in Fire and Aviation Management and Burned Area Emergency Response traveled to Greece as part of the USAID/OFDA-funded aid package. As part of the first team (September 2 – 8), USFS Director of Fire and Aviation Management Tom Harbour, Fire Aviation Officer Jim Boukidis, Soil Scientist Annette Parsons and International Programs/DASP Assistant Director Stephanie Savolaine worked with Greek counterparts to assess the impact of the wildfires and evaluate potential hazards

created by newly burned terrain. Noting the extreme climatic conditions that fueled these historic fires, this team identified a number of areas at potentially high risk from subsequent debris flows, landslides and wash-outs during the upcoming rainy season.

To prevent further loss of life and property, the team recommended US Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) tools and processes to help Greece address potential post-fire hazards. The team also identified a variety of management system and coordination issues that would provide fertile ground for future collaboration. Follow up activities will be described in future annual reports.

AFRICOM

During a six-month assignment (April - September), METI/STARs contractor Tom Frey represented USAID/OFDA with the U.S. military in Stuttgart, Germany. The military is developing a new combatant command for Africa called AFRICOM, currently headquartered in Stuttgart.

President Bush directed the military to develop a command that will “*strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa.*” With that direction, AFRICOM planners are developing an adaptive and non-traditional combatant command that intends to collaborate very closely with the interagency community as well as NGOs and international organizations. The AFRICOM structure will have both a civilian deputy and a military deputy to the commander to further emphasize its non-traditional role.

AFRICOM staff members are planning for activities that will potentially include support to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) efforts. Many of the military planners on the AFRICOM staff are not familiar with the mandate, responsibilities and procedures of USAID/OFDA.

Tom’s focus was to ensure that objectives, organizational structure and procedures established by AFRICOM clearly identify that AFRICOM’s role will be *in support of* USAID/OFDA and other humanitarian agencies. We feel confident that Tom’s efforts have helped put AFRICOM on the right track.



*Tom Frey's work in Stuttgart, Germany has helped AFRICOM understand and define its role in humanitarian response.
(Photo:)*

Training

Highlights

- Updated, planned and facilitated three *DART/RMT Essentials* courses for 71 USAID/OFDA staff and partners
- Developed, planned and facilitated *DASP Orientation for Detailers* course for 49 prospective detailers from the Forest Service and BLM
- Worked with USAID/OFDA Training Unit to plan and implement Introduction to USAID/OFDA course for the Los Angeles County Urban Search and Rescue Team

Trainings and Briefings

Description	Date	Audience	Location	Participants
DASP Orientation for Detailers	November 2006	Forest Service and BLM prospective detailers	Boise, ID (National Interagency Fire Center)	49
DART/RMT Essentials	November 2006	USAID/OFDA staff and partners	Arlington, VA (Quincy Street)	25
Introduction to USAID/OFDA	December 2006	Los Angeles County Urban Search and Rescue Team	Los Angeles, CA	52
DART/RMT Essentials	February 2007	USAID/OFDA staff and partners	Arlington, VA (Quincy Street)	24
DART/RMT Essentials	May 2007	USAID/OFDA staff and partners	Arlington, VA (Quincy Street)	22
Monthly RMT Briefings	Last Tuesday of each month	USAID/OFDA on-call RMTs	Washington, DC (9 th floor Operations Center)	120
CPR/First Aid Training	February 21 & 28, 2007	USAID/OFDA staff	Arlington, VA (Quincy Street)	20
			<i>Total</i>	312

- In November 2006, February 2007 and May 2007, DASP conducted four-day *Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and Response Management Team (RMT) Essentials* training courses for USAID/OFDA staff and partners. A total of 71 people were trained.

DASP continued to refine and update the course, adapting a number of session designs and related materials to address policy and procedure changes resulting

from the roll-out of the new RMT manual. The disaster simulation on the final day of the training continued to receive high marks from participants. As one trainee commented, “... *it really brought together everything we learned.*”

- In December, DASP staff member Gary Barrett worked closely with the USAID/OFDA Training Unit to conduct a series of two, 2 ½-day training courses for the Los Angeles County Fire and Rescue Team. A total of 52 people completed the course, which was titled *Introduction to USAID/OFDA and International Disaster Response*.

The training objective was to prepare USAR personnel for temporary assignments with OFDA, including DART or RMT duty. This course was well received by participants, one of whom commented that the course “... *was systematically organized to be very functional, intellectually challenging and emotionally engaging. Great job!*”

- In February 2007, Gary Barrett worked with USAID/OFDA's Training Unit to facilitate Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid training for 10 USAID/OFDA staff. In 2006, the American Red Cross reviewed and updated the procedures and related training for CPR and First Aid. Changes included elimination of rescue breathing, streamlining the steps for CPR and development of a new follow-along DVD for training.

Mission Disaster Preparedness

Highlights

- In consultation with relevant USAID/OFDA Regional Offices, planned and implemented Regional Mission Preparedness Consultations for South America, the Caribbean and Asia
- Provided technical assistance to USAID Missions in Bangladesh, Benin, Bulgaria, Malawi, Serbia, South Africa, Swaziland and Tanzania

Mission Disaster Relief Officer Database

The Mission Disaster Relief Officer (MDRO) is appointed by the Chief of Mission and is the focal point at post for disaster-related information, planning and activities affecting the host country. The MDRO prepares and updates the Embassy's Mission Disaster Relief Plan (MDRP) and ensures that members of the Embassy's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) are familiar with its guidance on emergency operations. The MDRO also maintains relationships with host-country emergency responders and government ministries, as well as NGOs and U.N. agencies in the country.

This year DASP continued to maintain a Mission Disaster Preparedness (MDP) eRoom on the OFDA.gov website which includes a database with MDRO and Alternate MDRO contact information. The database is located at <https://trauma.ofda.net/eRoom/FST/MDP>.

The Emergency Planning Handbook

The State Department requires every Foreign Service post to have an operative Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to assist post, the State Department and other U.S. Government agencies in responding to potential crises in a host country. Every EAP must include an MDRP, which provides information and guidance to posts on coordinating and managing U.S. Government assistance to foreign countries in response to natural and human caused disasters. The MDRP is the only component of the EAP which is not specifically focused on disaster impacts within the US Mission or on US citizens. The MDRP was formerly located in Chapter 700 of the EAP, but is now located in Annex J, entitled "*Assistance to Host Country in a Major Accident or Disaster*".

The MDRP is divided into 3 sections: disaster history (slow and rapid onset), capacities (host government, non-governmental organizations and donors) and emergency contacts. Each post is required to designate an MDRO who is USAID/OFDA's focal point and is also responsible for preparing and maintaining Annex J.

The Emergency Planning Handbook (EPH) is the principal source of guidance that posts use to develop EAPs. In June 2007, DASP Mission Disaster Preparedness

Coordinator Chris Leonardo briefed USAID/OFDA's Disaster Response and Mitigation (DRM) division on the State Department's revised EPH. The purpose of the briefing was to outline what the EPH means to OFDA, how it supports our work with Mission Disaster Relief Officers (MDROs) and its usefulness for response planning.

Virtual Assistance for MDROs

DASP supports Missions and Embassies as they develop MDRPs. This year, DASP's MDP Coordinator Chris Leonardo provided virtual assistance including tools, templates and advice to USAID Missions in Benin, Bulgaria, Serbia, Swaziland and Tanzania as those posts updated their MDRPs. Regional Advisor Jack Myer praised her efforts, saying, "*(t)his is what keeps our name good out here.*"

Kitty Andang, MDRO for USAID/Benin, found the technical assistance to be extremely helpful as she worked to consider the risks and vulnerabilities facing this West African country, which is located on the Gulf of Guinea and has a population of about eight million people. Kitty explained that "...as a new MDRO, the guidance, collaboration and excellent support I received from USAID/OFDA was critical to my submitting a thorough and useful MDRP update."



*Kitty Andang,
USAID/Benin MDRO*

According to Kitty, "*(t)he lessons learned* part was particularly challenging. Benin has not experienced a large number of disasters over the years and even fewer requiring USG assistance. Providing generic lessons learned for each type of disaster, however, will help us to develop appropriate disaster responses in the future." Benin's final MDRP is available on the State Department's *classnet* system.



*Bill Cherry,
USAID/Bulgaria MDRO*

With feedback and support from the DASP and USAID/OFDA's Regional Team for Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia (EMCA), USAID/Bulgaria's MDRO Bill Cherry pilot tested the State Department's Crisis and Emergency Planning Application (CEPA) in November 2006. This web-based tool updates Embassy Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) by guiding a Post's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) through the planning process.

Bill, who is USAID/Bulgaria's Executive Officer, concluded that, "... maintaining a regularly updated MDRP serves as a critical *go to* tool when faced with a disaster. When disaster strikes, there are so many things that we have to react to that are unanticipated,

so we don't need to make things more difficult by not having a plan in place that takes care of things we can anticipate. Just as important as having a plan in place, is having a system in place that reminds the MDRO and/or the EAC to ensure that the MDRP is updated regularly. Too many times a wonderful plan doesn't serve the Post, when after the years have gone by, no one has updated the plan, knows where it is or who is supposed to be in charge of maintaining it."

MDP Consultation and Training (in the field)	Virtual Technical Assistance
Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Venezuela, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Vietnam, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Laos, Indonesia, Thailand, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Grenada	Bangladesh, Benin, Bulgaria, Malawi, Serbia, South Africa, Swaziland and Tanzania
Total: 31	Total: 8

** This list is not meant to be exhaustive since technical assistance is continuously provided to US Missions by USAID/OFDA's Regional Advisors.*

Regional Mission Preparedness Consultations

In partnership with USAID/OFDA's Regional Offices for Asia and Latin America/Caribbean, DASP MDP Coordinator Chris Leonardo planned and implemented Regional Mission Disaster Preparedness consultations in Quito, Ecuador (November 7 - 9, 2006), Bangkok, Thailand (March 5 - 6, 2007) and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (March 27 - 29, 2007).

Thirty-five MDROs representing thirty-one countries attended. The objectives of these consultations were to familiarize MDROs with USG disaster response options, the resources and capacities of OFDA and the appropriate procedures for accessing these resources; to orient MDROs to the guidelines for developing the MDRP; and finally, to provide MDROs with the knowledge and tools to successfully respond to an emergency.



The MDRO team from South America convened in Quito, Ecuador from November 7 - 9, 2006

Each consultation was tailored to the individual needs of the region. For example, the South America consultation included a presentation from USAID/OFDA Senior Regional Advisor Tim Callaghan on *Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Disaster Response*. Regional Advisor Sidney Velado facilitated a session on vulnerabilities which included a discussion of El Niño conditions.



The MDRO team from Asia convened in Bangkok, Thailand from March 5 - 6, 2007

In Asia, many participants had a wealth of information and experience to share with the group, given the high disaster vulnerability in the region and their previous experience as MDROs. In FY 2006 alone, eleven countries experienced disasters severe enough to warrant USAID/OFDA assistance. Earthquakes occurred in India, Indonesia and Pakistan. Typhoons, a tsunami and torrential rains impacted more than 76 million people in China, Indonesia, the Philippines,

the Republic of Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. Insecurity in East Timor, Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka disrupted daily life, curtailed economic activity and led to



The MDRO team from the Caribbean convened in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from March 27 – 29, 2007

internal and cross-border population migration. A drought in Nepal and volcanic eruption in Indonesia further impacted these countries.

In contrast, many MDROs from the Caribbean were newly appointed and it was a good opportunity to meet prior to hurricane season. Heavy rains in Santo Domingo provided a relevant backdrop for the consultation, allowing participants to monitor an event in real time.

One challenge identified by many MDROs was the ability to rapidly fund partners in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. This can be

particularly difficult in small island nations where U.S.-based non-governmental organizations may not be present.

Since the USAID Missions in Bangkok and Santo Domingo provide regional services, USAID/OFDA was able to invite staff from the Regional Contracting Office and Financial Management Office to participate and provide advice on mechanisms to move funding quickly. This proved useful on multiple fronts. MDROs were able to discuss potential implementing partners with contracting staff, identifying potential barriers and exploring possible solutions before a disaster. In addition, staff from the contracting and finance offices had the opportunity to learn more about USAID/OFDA and its work, becoming more sensitized to the relief context.



The MDROs from the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic discuss the disaster declaration process

As with previous regional workshops, MDROs were given a chance to apply what they learned by preparing a draft MDRP, identifying country-specific hazards and vulnerabilities, exploring potential disaster relief partners and discussing local capacities. Participant evaluations noted that all felt better prepared to respond to a crisis at post after completing the consultation. Participants left with a better understanding of the issues facing their respective regions and a solid support network.

Development Outreach and Communication Officers

From October 17-20, USAID's Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) hosted a four-day workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa for 32 Development Outreach and Communications Officers (DOCs) from Africa. This was the final training for calendar year 2006, rounding out a series of workshops designed to increase DOC skill sets and share best practices.

The final day of the workshop was dedicated to USAID/OFDA and included a session designed to familiarize DOCs with USAID/OFDA's response criteria and disaster response options. Expanding DOCs' knowledge base about USAID/OFDA should prove to be beneficial during future disaster responses. For example, a DOC could be called upon to assist a DART with media and branding strategies or simply help get better press coverage for a \$50,000 contribution to a small scale disaster.

Senegal DOC Richard Nyberg's work with the DART in Niger during the 2005 humanitarian emergency in that country provides an excellent example of this type of collaboration. Richard worked with the DART until Rebecca Gustafson, a Press Officer from Washington, DC, could be deployed.

Training materials for the USAID/OFDA session were designed by DASP staff member Chris Leonardo in partnership with the USAID/OFDA Training Unit and the USAID/OFDA Technical Assistance Group. The Training Unit's Bob Walker, Principal Regional Advisor Harlan Hale and Operations Division Director James Fleming facilitated the session.

As a result of the series of LPA workshops around the globe, a total of 107 people from 70 USAID Missions received a basic orientation to OFDA, including mandate, response criteria and response options.

OFDA Annual Guidance Cable

DASP provided comments on USAID/OFDA's annual guidance cable, drafted by the Information Support Unit. The cable was distributed on October 3, 2006, after a vigorous review process. The cable provides direction to all posts concerning support from USAID/OFDA before, during and after the occurrence of natural and man-made disasters abroad.

Acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
AMDRO	Alternate Mission Disaster Relief Officer
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DOC	Development Outreach and Communication
DOD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
DRM	Disaster Response and Mitigation
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
FO	Field Officer
FOG	Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response
FS	Forest Service
FST	Field Support Team
FY	Fiscal Year
GIU	Geographic Information Unit
ICS	Incident Command System
JHOC	Joint Humanitarian Operations Course
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LPA	Legislative and Public Affairs
MDP	Mission Disaster Preparedness
MDRO	Mission Disaster Relief Officer
MDRP	Mission Disaster Relief Plan
NF	National Forest
NIFC	National Interagency Fire Center
NRP	National Response Plan
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OLU	Operations Liaison Unit
PASA	Participating Agency Services Agreement
PO	Program Officer
RMT	Response Management Team
RoLo	Remote Location Kit
STARs	Short Term Assistance from Retirees
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
USG	US Government